

# PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

AS 70-1  
11/10/83

November 1983



7023907  
ED K150X  
090203  
45203  
Be 2 nesda, MD 20214

LABOR  
SHORTAGE  
CRISIS:  
*How Practitioners  
Are Helping  
Companies Cope*

# PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

November 1988 Vol. 44 No. 11

## FEATURES

### 24 Labor Shortage Woes

Now that the "Baby Bust" generation is coming of working age, many organizations are finding themselves in a hiring pinch, and are employing innovative public relations programs to help attract new employees and keep existing ones.

*By Meryl Davids*

### In-Field Troubles: Wooing the Next Generation 26

A look at what public relations will have to do to fill its *own* new talent needs in the next decade.

### Scholarships: Increasingly Popular Employment Incentives 32

Corporate educational philanthropy, already on the upswing, will almost surely become more popular during the labor shortage because of its appeal to employees and the general public.

*By Janet Dyer*

### 34 Chet Burger: Management's Biggest Challenges for the '90s

Since opening a pioneering public relations management consulting firm 24 years ago, Chet Burger, APR, has counseled most of the largest firms and public relations departments in the country, helping them with problems and profits, structure and strategy, mergers and purges. This month, as Burger heads toward retirement, *PRJ* asked him to look back on his career and to look forward at the changes and challenges that will affect the field in the years ahead.



page 32

## ON THE RECORD

- 18 Can Public Relations Be Taught? • Business Ethics: A Moral Imperative • Corporate Downsizing: Minimizing Employee Trauma • Putting Real Muscle Behind College Public Relations



page 34

## WORKSHOP

- 43 How to Integrate Specialty Advertising into Your Campaign *By Richard G. Ebel*  
How to Nurture Creativity *By Gary Myers, APR*

## BRIEFINGS

- 8 Selling Advertisers on RV Affluence • AARP Goes High Tech • Talking Research



page 12

## DEPARTMENTS

|                                         |                                |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Inside Track _____ 4                    | People _____ 52                |
| <i>Karlene Lukovitz</i>                 |                                |
| Feedback _____ 6                        | Literature Showcase _____ 55   |
| Law _____ 12                            | Fast-Close Classified _____ 56 |
| Rethinking the Anonymous Source Dilemma |                                |
| <i>Maureen Rubin</i>                    |                                |
| Books _____ 48                          | My Favorite Failure _____ 60   |
| Back to the Books                       |                                |
| <i>Llyle Barker, Jr.</i>                |                                |
| Losing at the Name Game                 |                                |
| <i>Bob Perilla</i>                      |                                |

The *Public Relations Journal* is published by the Public Relations Society of America, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

Cover Photograph:  
*John A. Pellegrino*

## INSIDE TRACK

### SIGNING IN

**T**HIS being my first official issue as Editor of *Public Relations Journal*, and my first "Inside Track" column, I'd like to start by thanking all of you who have written or called to welcome me and to offer your support and encouragement.

Happily, I'll have an opportunity to meet many of you in person at the PRSA Annual Conference this month, as well as get to know you on a one-on-one basis over the next several months.

It's clear from your thoughtful comments that you read *Public Relations Journal* closely and very much consider it to be *your* magazine. These are the highest compliments that can be paid to a professional publication.

*PRJ* certainly made enormous strides forward under the direction of my predecessor, Michael Winkleman, and it's my intention, with the help of your continued input, to keep that momentum going full throttle.

So, if you've got an idea for an article that you would like to write, have a topic that you would like to see covered, or have a specialty, area of expertise, or viewpoint that you'd like to share—or, yes, even a complaint—we'd like to hear about it. Please send your note or article query to my attention.

By the way, before I move on to the content of this issue, I want to point out that the staff of *PRJ* deserves special credit for having maintained the high quality of the magazine during the transition period between editors.

Remember when the biggest labor recruitment problem for many companies was finding time to interview all of the qualified prospects? Well, if those days aren't yet over at your company and the companies of your clients, you can be pretty sure that they soon will be. Our cover story (page 24), written by executive editor Meryl Davids, gives a disturbing view of just how much of a problem the labor crunch already is for many or-

ganizations, and how increasingly widespread it will become over the next several years.

For both corp... public relations practitioners and counselors, however, the article offers good news: The labor shortage presents a major opportunity to shine by creatively helping top management tackle the problem *before* it becomes crippling.

Reading about the inventive and varied tactics being applied by practitioners to situations ranging from fast-food chains to law firms may provide inspiration for programs that would address your own company's or clients' labor needs.

Elsewhere in this issue (page 12), Maureen Rubin, an attorney and associate professor of journalism at California State University, addresses the timely and often perplexing issue of whether or not it ever makes sense for practitioners to act as anonymous sources for the press.

Given a recent, possibly precedent-setting Minnesota case concerning this matter, even those of you who've been following a standard policy for years might well want to take a look at this piece. And the sensible, doable ways to minimize risk outlined by the author are must-reads for anyone who may have occasion to act as an unnamed source.

When it comes to management consulting for the field of public relations, no name is more well known or respected than that of Chet Burger. Now that Burger, who has never been known for pulling punches, is about to retire, we asked him to give his no-holds-barred assessment of where public relations managers are succeeding and failing, and how they'll need to improve to be ready for the challenges of the next decade. Send your own reactions to his opinions; we'll publish them in the next available issue.

—Karlene Lukovitz  
Editor

**PRSA** Public Relations  
Society of America  
33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003  
(212) 995-2230

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) is an individual membership professional society of 14,265 public relations practitioners. Its major services to members include programs of Professional Development and Accreditation, an Information Center, publications, tracking of issues of national concern, and promotion of ethical practice through adherence to PRSA's "Code of Professional Standards." PRSA's mission is "To serve the public need for understanding and cooperation among its diverse interests by fostering high professional and ethical standards for all those practicing public relations."

Officers of the Public Relations Society of America:  
**Dwayne Summar**, APR, president; **John L. Paluszek**, APR, president-elect; **Isobel Parke**, APR, secretary; **E. Zoe McCathrin**, APR, treasurer; **Elizabeth Ann Kovacs**, CAE, executive vice president.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

Editor

Publications Director  
**KARLENE LUKOVITZ**

Production Director  
**JAY WEISER**

Executive Editor  
**MERYL DAVIDS**

Senior Editor  
**CELIA KUPERSZMID LEHRMAN**

Art Director  
**SUSAN YIP**

Associate Publisher,  
Advertising  
**ZOE DICTROW**

Advertising Coordinator  
**JOSEPH WHITFIELD**

Special Projects  
**SCOTT TORO**

Subscriptions  
**MICHAEL CHU**  
(212) 995-2230



The *Public Relations Journal* (ISSN 0033-3670) is published monthly, except a combined July/August, and semi-monthly in June, by the Public Relations Society of America, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

The second issue in June is the **Register** issue. Of the amount of dues paid by members of the Society, \$16.00 is for a year's subscription to *PRJ*. Nonmember subscription rates: \$36.00 a year; \$68.00 for two years; \$102.00 for three years. Canada and all other foreign countries please add \$2.00 to one-year rate; \$4.00 to two-year rate; and \$6.00 to three-year rate. Subscriptions must be paid in U.S. funds with check drawn on a U.S. bank. Single copies \$3.50 each. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to the *Public Relations Journal*, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. Members of the Canadian Public Relations Society receive the *Public Relations Journal* as a benefit of membership.

Copyright 1988 by Public Relations Society of America.

Editorial Offices: 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003, (212) 995-2230.

Advertising offices: 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003

Display Advertising: (212) 995-5708

Classified Advertising: (212) 995-2266

# BRIEFINGS

All these communications services do, of course, have the effect of keeping AARP in the public eye. But the association's strong presence on Capitol Hill has been perhaps the single biggest factor in establishing its name recognition and clout. This year alone, AARP has earmarked more than \$8 million for lobbying efforts on behalf of older Americans; and its 40-member public relations department logs more than 50 calls per day from reporters wanting the organization's views on topical issues. AARP buttresses these efforts with fact sheets, titled "Where We Stand," which are sent to public opinion leaders, political leaders, and its own members.

Holland emphasizes that "image is something you purchase; reputation is something you earn—and AARP's reputation is pristine." Nevertheless, the scope and aggressiveness of its lobbying efforts have generated some criticism along the way. A staff member of the House Select Committee on Aging had this to say about AARP last September in *The New York Times*: "As a resource, Congress turns to [AARP] first on a wide range of issues . . . but it's a little like being friendly with an 800-pound gorilla."

As the number of Americans at retirement age grows, AARP's most difficult public relations challenge may be managing its larger-than-life image and achieving its goals while not alienating those who don't belong to its roster. In other words, it will need to show that it's a gentle giant.

Janet Dyer

Jan Dyer is a freelance writer based in Suffern, NY.

## Talking Research

**A**LTHOUGH three out of four public relations professionals agree that research is a necessary part of the public relations process, public relations research and measurement is still mostly informal, unscientific, and rarely done, according to a new survey by Ketchum Public Relations.

While 93 percent of the respondents say that research is important, most agree that, in reality, public relations research "is still talked about much more than it is done."

The national survey was conducted via a questionnaire mailed to 945 randomly selected senior public relations executives, counselors, and academicians. More than half (58 percent) of the 253 responses received were from public relations executives at corporations, financial institutions, or other businesses; 15 percent were from public relations counselors or suppliers; and the remainder came from nonprofit organizations, associations, professional societies, and academia.

### Value isn't questioned

The majority of respondents (57 percent) agree that it is indeed possible to measure public relations outcomes, as well as impact and effectiveness, in precise terms. According to Walter K. Lindenmann, APR, Ketchum's director of research, denying that research can be measured is one of the two main impediments that slow the growth of public relations research; the other is lack of funds.

According to the survey,

## Which specialties are researched most?

| Specialty                           | % of practitioners conducting research |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Employee/Management Communications  | 71%                                    |
| Marketing/Product Public Relations  | 69%                                    |
| Media Relations/Publicity           | 65%                                    |
| Corporate Image/Identity            | 61%                                    |
| Issues Tracking and Analysis        | 50%                                    |
| Customer Relations                  | 50%                                    |
| Public Affairs/Government Relations | 46%                                    |
| Community Relations                 | 46%                                    |
| Institutional Advertising           | 43%                                    |
| Investor/Financial Relations        | 41%                                    |

*While investor/financial relations is the area least likely to be researched, nearly two-thirds of respondents surveyed by Ketchum Public Relations say employee/management communications has been studied within the past two years.*

three out of four practitioners conduct research at least "occasionally" before planning and developing a new program or strategy, but only about one quarter (24 percent) conduct such preliminary research "very frequently." Practitioners are least likely to use research (such as quick polls—to informally gauge public opinion) when a crisis strikes; only 9 percent say they do this "very frequently." Slightly more than half (58 percent), though, say they at least occasionally monitor or track their activities so that direction can be changed or modified.

Literature searches and information retrievals are particularly favored: 34 percent of the respondents use them frequently and 47 percent occasionally. While communications audits are also a favorite for occasional use (59 percent), they are used frequently by just 16 percent of those surveyed. Publicity tracking or media monitoring, telephone and mail surveys,

and focus groups were, in that order, the next three most popular forms of research.

### Specialists: Research fans

Although research still seems to be a low priority on the whole, it is increasingly popular among certain specialties—the 55 responding counselors, academicians, and suppliers said that, over the last three years, their research time has expanded either moderately (24 percent) or dramatically (53 percent).

More than half (55 percent) of those surveyed agree that research volume will continue to increase, but they were not asked when, or why, they believe this. Lindenmann notes that research must become more sophisticated and practitioners must become better educated in research techniques before they turn to it more often.

Maureen McGee

Maureen McGee is an editorial intern at PRJ.